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The Dilemma of the Good Man

BY CLARENCE A. SPAULDING

If the foundations be destroyed what shall the righteous do? Psalm 11:3.

SOME years ago the British Colonial Office made a startling discovery. The death rate among adults in a primitive tribe of blacks in equatorial Africa was rapidly rising. The deaths were due not to some contagious disease such as smallpox, influenza or the like, but was occasioned by an epidemic of suicides!

These tribesmen, it seems, lived on the edge of the desert. Hard by their tribal land rose a range of mountains covered with a valuable hardwood forest. This property was owned by a British syndicate and patrolled by Royal Rangers. The Colonial Office requested these Rangers to investigate and discover if they could the cause or reason for the tribesmen taking this tragic way out of their troubles.

Questioning the families and friends of the deceased, the Rangers reported that every year the desert made great inroads on the tribal lands. Sometimes it bit off one mile, frequently two miles and ofttimes three miles of arable property. These primitive people were very superstitious and obsessed with fear. Marking the continued inroad of the desert they had come to the conclusion that the gods were hostile and that it was only a question of time before all the land would be desert and the whole tribe destroyed. There was therefore no use fighting their fate; they might as well bow to the inevitable; so they took their own lives.

In returning this report the Rangers recommended that a conservation program be adopted. For they were wise enough to see that if the encroachment of the desert were to continue, it was only a question of time before their own hardwood forests would be affected. So they began on the desert's edge to plant succulents and shrubs and grasses that could withstand the blis-

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tering heat of the wind and sun. In this fashion they halted not only the inroads of the desert but gradually year by year they reclaimed the arable land that had been lost and incidentally saved from destruction their own hardwood forests.

IS THE WORLD HOSTILE?

In a sense this story is a parable of life. Multitudes looking out on the world today are convinced that it is hostile. They are unable to withstand the inroads made by the blighting experiences of life. The depression, unemployment, the ruin and threat of war have all been vital factors in creating widespread pessimism as to the meaningfulness and value of life. Many have been tempted to give up the game, like the primitive blacks. They have walked out of hotel windows; they have locked bathroom doors and turned pistols on themselves; they have gone to the garage, turned on the motor and inhaled carbon monoxide gas. Life has been too much for them and they have taken the primitive black's method of escaping from it.

Then too, there is an even larger group between the ages of 30 and 50 who are not so hopelessly pessimistic as to want to take their own lives—but who are baffled and disillusioned. Their ideals have become tarnished. The fine edge of truth and honesty has been dulled for them by repeated compromise. Like the Cardinal in the play, "A Royal Family," "they too could wish they had been born old and could grow younger and simpler . . . until in the sweet innocency of a babe they could lie down to eternal sleep."

Said a college president to a recent graduating class: "I feel sorry for you as you leave these halls and go out into the world. I feel sorry for you because of what the world will do to you and to your ideals. Too often, a man's ideals are in inverse proportions to his distance from college."

Such a condition of affairs, however, is not a particular phenomenon of the present world. It is as old as life itself. The 11th Psalm portrays a man disturbed and upset, as many are today. He saw what he thought were the foundations of society utterly destroyed. His course of action was undecided. He found it necessary to overhaul his thinking, to revamp his philosophy of life. In his dilemma, he asked this pointed question: "If the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do?"

Let us examine this man. Let us find out, if we may, what it is that has happened to him.

THE DILEMMA OF DAVID

If, as the scholars pretty generally agree, this psalm can be attributed to King David, we can rest assured that it welled up in one of those black moments of his life when the tide was running out.

Some commentators see, as the background of the vivid imagery of this psalm, the revolt of Absalom. That impetuous youth had not only stolen his father's popularity with the people, but had plotted for the throne. His army is in the field. He has captured the city. He has profaned his father's harem. The king is a fugitive. His advisers counsel escape—go while the going is good! "Flee," they say, "as a bird to the mountain."

Others see as the background those first terrible days when young David was an outlaw pursued by the soldiers of Saul. His unselfish proffer of friendship and service is met first with jealousy and suspicion, then open hostility. A price is on his head. In those first bitter moments of disillusionment he has to face the issue—"What is the use of being good and honest if this is the only reward?" His youthful ideals have received a body blow; the foundations on which he had organized his life, the things he had believed in, were destroyed—friendship, unselfishness, the royalty of kingly honor. What is there left?

But, whatever may have been his actual experience, we are certain that here is a man who has done his best to do what is right only to find that the world has crashed around him. His sense of values hangs in the balance. Spiritually his back is to the wall. In the wreck of his times, his own soul is threatened. Everything he has builded on—the foundations of his life, his friendships, his religion, his political ideals, his economic security—gone! What is there left? What course is open to him? What can he do?

Well, he can do one of two things. He can do what David's counselors advised him to do. He can flee! He can attempt to escape reality. He can retreat. He can leave the field. He can fold up his tent and quit the game. He can say, "What's the use!"

THE FOLLY OF FLIGHT

This is the answer of Buddhism. The central tenet of this faith is: the world is evil; man is bound by fate to the wheel of existence; his only hope is to escape from it by extinction.

This also, in a sense, is the answer of monasticism. In the Middle Ages the good man, face to face with the evils of the world, said in effect, "You can't do anything about it." So the monk retreated to the desert or the mountains, there in solitude to meditate and pray.

But, just as monasticism found out and as the Orient revealed, we do not escape reality by fleeing from it. As the black maid said to her neurotic mistress, complaining of her weariness and need of a vacation: "What you-all need a vacation for? Don' you-all know you'se goin' to have to take yo'self with you?" That is what has happened to many people. They have tried to escape from reality. The salt of life has lost its savor. They have flattened out. Their faith is in eclipse. The fight is taken out of them. Life has become futile, useless.

In no other way can we explain the amazing arrogance of vulgarity. Only in a world where moral values have lost their meaning would brewers dare make use of the Virgin Mary in their advertisements or cigaret manufacturers proclaim their product as "your best friend."

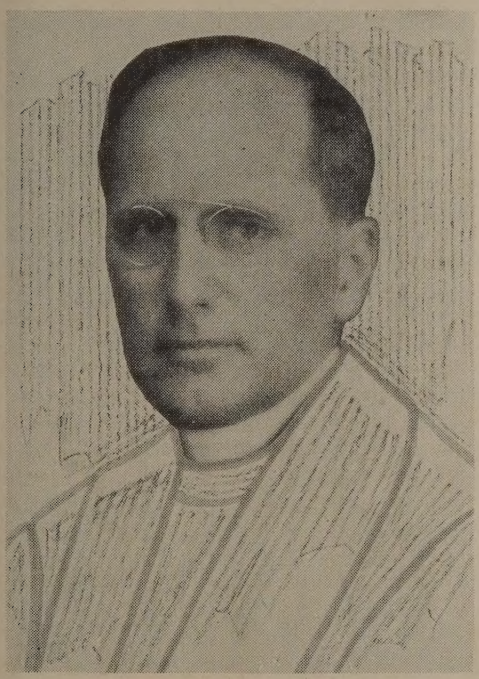
No, the good man has not solved the problem of reality by any escape mechanism—by fleeing!

What alternative, then, is left? Only one—that of facing the difficulty! This at least he can do. He can

examine the so-called foundations on which his life was supposedly built to be certain that they were truly foundations and that those foundations were really destroyed.

Let me illustrate. It was my privilege to pass through the Santa Barbara earthquake. I shall never forget the helplessness of the occasion. There was a sense of utter insignificance as I stood in the center of the room at the dawn of a new day and heard the terrible roar of the quake as it tore through the earth, buckling and bending it like the waves of the sea, shaking the houses in its passage as the terrier shakes a rat.

And when the quake had passed, what a desolation!



CLARENCE A. SPAULDING

Chimneys down, plaster off the walls, houses moved from their foundations, streets choked with fallen walls and debris! But—and this is the point—had anything fundamental been changed or destroyed? No! The foundations of the earth were still there. Rock was still rock, sunshine was still sunshine, the gold in the earth was still gold, the law of gravity still functioned. There had been a readjustment of forces and pressures, but the foundations of the earth were not destroyed. There were collapses of superstructure, but out of the wreck of the city came better construction codes and the erection of buildings capable of withstanding shock.

Now apply the illustration. We have been passing through economic, social, political, religious earthquakes. The forms of some of our institutions may be damaged; they may possibly have collapsed. All may be in woeful need of reconstruction, rebuilding, remodeling.

There are those who tell us that democracy has failed. Certainly anyone observing its functioning in the past twenty years must realize that it sadly needed shaking up. But has anything happened in the world that has destroyed the fundamental concepts of democracy—the right of the individual to liberty, and freedom?

ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND THE CHURCH

Again, there are those who tell us that the economic structure of capitalism has collapsed. Surely anyone with eyes to see people starving while crops are destroyed, unemployed men walking the streets, and the wheels of industry not turning while the banks are full of money, must know that such a system is sadly in need of reconstruction. But has the fundamental principle on which capitalism is based—the right of the individual to a fair return for the investment of himself or his money—been destroyed?

There are those who tell us that the church is outmoded, that religion is superstition or an opiate. As a matter of fact, in the 1920's there was hardly a novel in which the name of God was used in any other way than as an oath. Character after character was drawn, both male and female, who repeatedly boasted that they were "too smart to be religious." A little study of the terminology used led us to believe that the word "religion" as used by the writers had been confused with "denominationalism," which even the blindest churchman today recognizes as a blight. But what a blessing it would be if out of this earthquake of criticism that has rocked the church to its foundations, the church would emerge with its denominational lines obliterated, welded into a unity to face a godless and pagan world with the message of redemption in "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism"!

My point is that the foundations of life have not been destroyed—only the forms of life. And the bewildered and disillusioned man of today will do well to examine what he thought were the foundations of his life to find out whether they were actually foundations—or simply forms of life. That at least he can do.

THE BLIGHT OF SKEPTICISM

For our greatest menace today is not the good man pondering his dilemma of destroyed foundations. The greatest enemy of religion is that determined philosophy of skepticism, so common today, which declares, not that "the foundations of life have been destroyed," but that there are no foundations to life—no absolutes; that everything is relative; that there is no divine sanction for this or that conduct; that morality is like a fashion, it depends simply upon the whim of the individual!

To all such skepticism we need to give the wise answer that Dr. McDowell once gave to Mr. Carnegie. He had been pleading with the steel baron, in view of his humanitarian interests and public benefactions, to yield his heart to Christ and become an active supporter of the church.

Mr. Carnegie demurred, asserting his fundamental belief in religion but his lack of need of the church or her teaching, "I never go to bed," he said, "but that I say to myself: 'Andy, mon, have ye done anything

this day that your mother would be ashamed of?'" To which Dr. McDowell rightly replied: "Mr. Carnegie, I am surprised that a man of your intelligence could think to fool God by such a prayer. What does your mother know about making steel? The prayer you should pray every night should be something like this: 'Andy, mon, have ye done anything this day that the United States inspectors would get you on?'"

Then, taking his watch from his pocket, Dr. McDowell continued: "Mr. Carnegie, this watch is a fairly accurate watch. By it I catch the train and keep my appointments. It runs with a fair degree of regularity. But how would you like to have the universe run by this watch—or would you rather have this watch regulated by the solar system?"

THE THINGS THAT ABIDE

Just so, the righteous man will discover, as the result of the experience of life, that there are higher sources of power than himself; that there are certain conclusions not open to debate; that there are some matters on which no intelligent man is in doubt. As a wise spiritual leader once said: "When diphtheria comes into the home, we do not call a physician who is open-minded about the use of antitoxin. We do not send our children to school where the teacher is open-minded about the multiplication table." Just so, the righteous man will find undestroyed the fundamental foundations of the moral order. He will find that he can build his life on love and justice and righteousness. In his dilemma he can go on being righteous—"Shall not the judge of all the earth do right!" He can believe in the redemptive power of love—"Love never faileth!" He can seek peace and pursue it. "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God!" He can face the realities of life and conquer them as Conrad's sea captain outrode the typhoon.

You remember the story, do you not? Old Captain McWhirr had sailed the Indian ocean for twoscore years without a mishap. Suddenly he found his ship in the grip of one of those awful swirling storms called typhoons. As the storm tossed his ship about like a cork, he called to his pilot, "Keep her nose in the teeth of the gale." Making his way to the speaking tube he ordered the engineer, "Full steam ahead!" As he turned from the tube a sailor staggered up and reported, "All the lifeboats have been washed overboard." "Too bad," replied McWhirr, "but it can't be helped. Go back to your station." And taking his place by the pilot, he sailed his ship to port, "its nose in the teeth of the gale and full steam ahead."

When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? He can still be righteous. He can set himself, like the Master of men, with his face to Jerusalem. He can take up his cross and follow.

> For the Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord, his throne is in heaven.
> The Lord trieth the righteous, but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth,
> For the Lord is righteous, he loveth righteousness
> And the upright shall behold his face.

How May We Survive the Horrors of These Times?

By John Haynes Holmes

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life. Revelation 2:7.

I AM using a text this morning in order to indicate that in one word, and not in another, I would present the answer to our question. How may we survive the horrors of these times? By *overcoming* them, and not by *escaping* them!

Most people seem to feel that the only way to survive at all today—to retain our happiness, to preserve our integrity, to do our work—is to escape the horrors which are forced upon us by every headline and in every radio. Some turn to books of a light and frivolous character. Some seek the movies and the theater. Gambling is an unfailing mechanism of escape. Then there is dissipation, of which drinking is the easiest and most familiar example. Thus do we survive—by running away from a reality which is too much for us.

Now, that some kind of escape is necessary, or, to put it another way, that escape is sometimes necessary, I should be the last to deny. I do not see how we can live at any time, least of all in times like these, unless occasionally we escape into some world different from this present world which "is too much with us." Happy the man who has worked out, along with the other practices of his life, a method or discipline of escape. A moment or two in every hour when he may turn away from the world, and inward upon himself, and see a flitting vision of something fairer than mankind has ever known! An hour or two in every day when he may read a book, or listen to some music, and be transported to the fair realm of some genius's imagination! A day in every week when he may turn from the crowded ways of life to seek solace and inspiration in the company of his friends, and in the august presence of the living God! A few weeks in every year when he may flee the city, and seek "a pleasure in the pathless woods" or "a rapture by the lonely shore." I could not live if I did not have my own escapes—my anthologies of poetry, my favorite symphonies, my garden by the sea—where I can forget what *is* in the contemplation of what *might be*. Let me not discourage any tired or frightened heart by underestimating the efficacy of a spiritual anodyne which, like sleep, "knits up the raveled sleeve of care."

But let men not underestimate the danger of this method of escape, and its inadequacy to meet the real problem of survival. For escape to the weary soul is like medicine to the sick body. Beneficial—yes! The difference, perhaps, at some moments, between life and death! But to take medicine constantly, to live on drugs and dopes and stimulants, is as fatal in the end as not to take medicine at all when needed. And medicine, be it noted, is helpless to sustain life and fight off death,

unless it releases and quickens those innate forces of nature which are themselves the essence of existence. It is nature, and not medicine, which must work the cure. And so with these souls of ours in relation to this weary, woeful world! To run away is only in the end to avoid what must be met and overcome, if we are to survive the disaster of our days. And what is it to overcome the world? How may we meet life and conquer it, and not be conquered by it?

I would emphasize four ways of overcoming the world, and therewith surviving even the horrors of these times. The first is *a rule of action* to be followed; the second is *a point of view* to be taken; the third is *a lesson of experience* to be learned; and the fourth is *a vision of faith* to be beheld.

I

First, the *rule of action!* It is the simple proposition that, if we are to survive the horrors of these times, we must *do* something about them. There is not much, perhaps, that we can do in terms of ending them, or even ameliorating them. We are persons of little strength, and far removed from the field of action. But there is some place where the weakest of us can hitch on—some work, surely, which even the least of us can do.

I have on two or three occasions met persons who have been in railroad accidents, and heard them tell of their experiences. Sooner or later there has always come the question—"But how could you survive such an experience? These broken limbs and bleeding bodies, these cries and moans and groans, the dead smashed beyond all recognition of the human form! How could you stand it?"—and always there has come the answer, offered in a spirit of some surprise: "Why, I was so busy—there was so much to do! I didn't think of anything. I didn't see anything, wasn't aware of any horror—not until it was all over." And I recall one man who told how he bound up the injured and comforted the dying, without any thought of exhaustion or dismay; and then, while he was waiting quietly with other passengers for the relief train, he fainted dead away.

It is action that can alone save us from collapsing. To keep busy is to create a kind of unconsciousness of agony and horror. Which means, in the present calamity of the world, that we must *do* something if we are to survive! What to do may not be so easy to say—not at this distance! But there are two things which immediately suggest themselves to any mind.

The first is relief! There are more people suffering in the world today than ever before in modern history. The tide of human misery at this hour, in its totality of sweat and tears and blood, of fear and despair and agony, is greater than any mind can ever imagine. How can we endure the contemplation of such horror, if we do not do something about it? And fortunately the chances to do something are all around us. If we value our own peace of mind, our own integrity of soul, to say nothing of human succor, let us become a part of this work. If we have a little surplus, let us give it where it may be of service without stint. If it happens that we have no surplus, then let us go to the movies one less time a week, go without a meal at noon or night, and give what we save to those who have nothing. A woman in a railroad wreck will tear her clothes from her body to staunch the wounds of the dying. Can we do less to give food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, and shelter to the homeless?

Secondly, in addition to relief, there is reform. I could not be satisfied in this calamity if I did not do what I could to forestall and prevent its recurrence. Which one of you can be easy in mind if you do not seek a place in the ranks of those who are fighting to do away with war, and establish a just and durable peace upon this earth? Would you survive these horrors by overcoming them instead of running away from them? Then I adjure you to take some cause which seems to fit your philosophy of life, and give to it the best and most that you can spare. What the cause may be, I do not at this moment, or from this point of view, care overmuch. Some of us may think that the most effective thing to do is to join the War Resisters, and wash our hands of war. Some of us may think, in this immediate crisis, that it is wisest to join the Committee for Defending America by Aiding the Allies, and thus doing what we can to destroy Hitler. Some of us may look beyond this war, and choose to work with Clarence Streit for his idea of Union Now. But it makes no difference, for our spiritual need, just what we do or where we go. The important thing is that, for our sanity, we lose ourselves in the lives of others, and straightway find ourselves in our sacrifice of time and labor and money for a better world.

II

This brings me to my second suggestion. After the rule of action comes a *point of view.* We must change our perspective upon mankind, if we are to survive in this mad world.

Our perspective at the present time, with most of us at least, is a short-range perspective—a "close-up" point of view. I would have our perspective a long-range perspective—a point of view from a distance, and there all around. There are various ways of expressing what I mean.

One is to utilize the imagery of space. Thomas Hardy did this, as the old Greek dramatists used to do it, by looking at the world of men from the vantage-point of the cosmos. We see this in his great masterpiece, "The Dynasts," wherein he surveys the vast panorama of the Napoleonic wars not with the eyes of the soldiers and statesmen who participated in those wars, nor yet with his own eyes as the author of the poem, but with the eyes of the gods, or destinies, inhabiting the outer rims of space. Thus, at the opening and the close of each scene, as at the opening and close of the drama itself, he transports us to the remote heavens, from which Europe looks like a little map beneath our hands, and there bids us listen to the celestial converse of the cosmic Spirits, and thus behold things against the background of infinity. Strange how the character, and certainly the importance, of things change when seen from the standpoint of the firmament, the

vast reaches of unending space, in which the earth floats like a tiny speck of dust in a cathedral.

H. G. Wells gives us the same idea by resort to the imagery of time. Let us take a clock-face, he says, which marks the passing of an hour, and conceive this as covering the span of man's life upon this planet—itself but an infinitesimal fraction of a second of the terrestrial span. Then let us indicate upon the face of this clock the time covered by the period of man's historic existence—the years from his emergence out of the unrecorded and unremembered past, down through the annals of civilization to this present moment. How much time do you think that this would be? At the very most, some twenty or thirty seconds! It is only within the last minute of his hour upon this planet, in other words, that man has lived at all within the compass of what we know as ordered society. Yet we look at this last minute, and despair that man still bungles, still fails, and still goes wrong! Would it not be wiser—would we not be seeing farther into the truth of things—if we took the standpoint of God, to whom, the Psalmist tells us, "a thousand years are but as yesterday, or as a watch in the night"?

Another way of describing this long-range perspective is through the use of parable, or poetry. Have you ever gone well out to sea in a small boat? The weather may be fair, the wind not strong. But as your little craft wallows in the waves, it seems as though the fountains of the deep were broken up. And you are frightened! But things look different if, on this same ocean, you walk the decks of a great liner. The wind may this time be blowing a gale, and the waves running high against the horizon. But you are now standing some eighty or a hundred feet above the surface of the water. You note the turbulence of the sea, but it does not disturb you. At this distance, the tumbling waves seem very small. Still another point of view upon this scene is obtained from an airplane. Now you are moving a mile, perhaps two miles above the ocean. As you look downward you see not waves that are bigger than your boat, not yet a sea that beats upon a towering liner, but one vast and quiet expanse of water. All seems so strangely calm! The water looks as smooth as glass.

It all depends upon the point of view! If we are too near an object, every aspect of it is out of proportion. It is thus that you and I are too near to this great war which is now raging in Europe, to measure its compass and understand its character. We are in the small boat, in the midst of towering waves, rolling in the trough of the sea, with no horizons anywhere in sight. From this immediate point of view, it seems as though we were caught in a catastrophe which was going to destroy everything. It undoubtedly will destroy many things which make up the content of our world—ways of life, types of culture, political arrangements, economic systems, international relations. This is a revolution, not a war! But if we can only get outside the events which compass us about—look down, like Hardy's Spirits, from some cosmic vantage-ground, upon this spectacle of earth—behold things from the standpoint not of this flitting second of time, but of the whole clock-face of eternity—then shall we see that there is nothing final in what is going on today. There is not even anything new. All this has happened before. In the whole range of human history civilizations have appeared, only in due course to disappear. The history of the world is the living and dying of persons. No government, no society, has ever lasted more than seven or eight hundred years. But man has gone on! Nothing has been able to destroy the human race. Here we are, after wars, and invasions, and famines, and pestilences, and revolutions, and dark ages, plunging now into another storm of violence and terror, but destined to survive this latest disaster as surely as we have survived the disasters of the past.

It is perspective that we need, if we are to overcome the world. It is this long-range point of view, which can see not only this wild welter of the present moment, but also the long centuries that have gone, and foresee the longer centuries that are yet to come—it is this which can save us from despair. For our generation, in all probability, there is no hope. Though I live to be eighty, ninety years of age, I shall see no quieting of these stupendous disturbances of our time—no end to this vile work of destruction and death. But why should I limit my vision to this petty period of twenty or thirty years? Why should I not extend my gaze into the life-span of my children and my children's children? "I will lift mine eyes to the hills," says the Psalmist—the hills that stand unshaken amid earthquake and tempest, their heads among the stars! Then shall I find "strength" to endure every vicissitude and horror of this dreadful age.

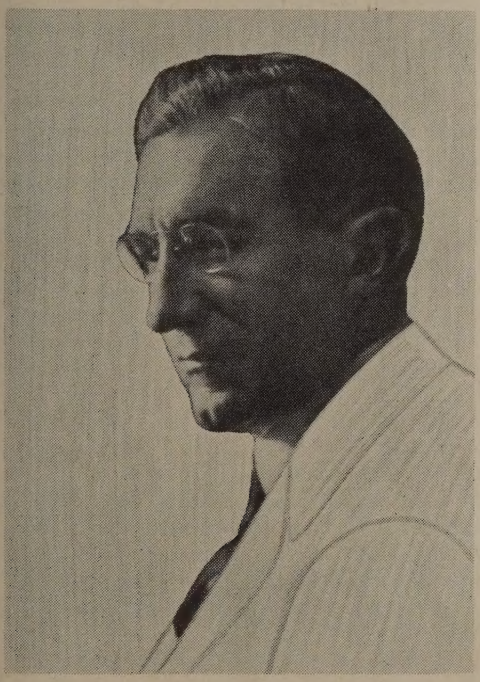
So much for the long-range point of view! But this is not enough, for it does little for those who are actually in the midst of the suffering in Europe. It is all right for us to talk, who have known no mortal ill. It is easy to have a far vision on these safe shores of America. But what about the refugees, and the conquered, and the hungry, and the forlorn—those who have lost everything, and will never live to recover what they have lost? Is there anything that will enable them to survive the horrors of this hour as those who may still have hope?

III

This brings me to my third recommendation this morning. I have spoken of a rule of action, and a point of view. Now I would speak of *a lesson of experience.*

This lesson is the truth, taught by all experience, that suffering is not in vain. If it be nobly borne, it works a spiritual miracle in the heart of the sufferer. And when it is too terrible to be borne, and too final to achieve any discipline of patience and courage in the single individual, it takes on a vicarious quality which makes it a redemptive agency in the life of the race. We see this illustrated by the death of Jesus on the cross. What profoundly impresses me is the fact that Jesus did not die in vain—that he accomplished by his agony on the cross what he could not have accomplished had he lived to be as old as the patriarchs before him. It was Jesus' apparent defeat and apparent death, his humiliation and suffering and despair, which crowned

his work. His suffering had worked a spiritual miracle for mankind. It made Jesus live anew in the hearts of those who loved him. It created Jesus an abiding influence in the lives of those who heard his name. Because Jesus had so lived, and so died, the world was a different place, and men were different beings, and history told a different tale! "We are troubled on every side," wrote St. Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, "yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed, always bearing about in us the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in us."



JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

To describe this influence as unique in Jesus is a mistake. For this redemptive influence of suffering is resident not in the experience of Jesus alone, but in the experience of mankind. Jesus is probably the greatest single spiritual influence that has ever entered into the life of man. The drama of his suffering has captured the imagination of the race. But what he did through the sheer power of sacrificial agony, heroically endured in dedication to the needs of men, has been done by others in the measure alike of their ability and opportunity. There have been martyrs from the beginning of the world, and the blood of these martyrs has been seed from which humanity has sprung to a nobler and braver type of life. There are martyrs today, millions of them, more than have ever suffered and died at one time in any previous period of history—and their blood is sowing the seed of the life that is yet to be. For suffering, I repeat, is not in vain. It cannot be confined to the experience of those who endure it. It does something to those who see it, or only hear of it. It is the eternal irony of fate, and the perfect proof of the moral integrity of the universe, that all that tyranny in the end can do is to produce suffering which melts the hearts of men, and therewith creates the condition of its own undoing. For suffering stirs horror; horror in due course turns to pity, and pity to love; then love moves to action; and action seeks not only to ameliorate suffering, but to destroy the cruelty that produces it. It is thus that suffering is not in vain. It is the law of life which imparts to others the power and purpose to redeem mankind from the woes that weigh it down. The stricken multitudes of Europe—they are not mere chaff blown before the wind, mere dust and stubble trodden under foot. Rather are they the living seed of the new humanity which shall yet glorify the earth.

IV

One last suggestion of how we may overcome the world, and therewith survive the horror of these times —this suggestion a kind of summary of all that has gone before! I refer to what I have called *a vision of faith*—an insight into life which may reveal the invincible power of the spirit.

There are two philosophies, or faiths, which have ever guided and controlled the lives of men. One of these is materialism—the idea that this universe is fundamentally materialistic in character. Its phenomena, that is to say, represent nothing more nor less than so many interactions of matter and force. It may be, as modern scientists contend, that matter is itself only an aspect of force, which is the sole reality. But this simply makes the universe an expression of a single energy, or power—a realm in which physical force, physical laws, physical causes and results, are alone operative.

Now it is when we understand that it is this materialistic philosophy which has always been dominant in the minds of men, that we can begin to understand the nature of human affairs. The majority of men have always believed, as they believe today, that they have no ultimate means at their disposal for the accomplishment of their ends upon this earth but *physical* means. If they have something to protect, then they must protect it by force. If they have something to gain, then they must gain it by the utilization, in whatever disguised or hidden form, of sheer brute strength. If they organize a society, it must be on the basis of force as the ultimate reliance of government. If they build a nation, it must be behind the bulwark of armed might. Weakness is the unpardonable sin in such a world, strength the incomparable virtue. It is thus that every crisis in human affairs becomes a conflict of force and violence—the whole economy of life the economy of war.

It is thus that the present crisis overwhelms us with such a display of physical power in world-wide war as threatens to destroy us all. Once more a great conqueror has appeared, who takes the world at its word. Everything is a matter of power—of physical predominance! Very well, then, says this conqueror, I will marshal such power as the world has never seen before, and I will subdue men to my will. Hitler, in

other words, now looms before us as the magnificent and terrifying incarnation of everything that we ourselves have believed, and ourselves have done. He is the logically perfect consequence of our whole philosophy of life. And we know nothing to do about him except to try, in desperate fashion, to bring against him more force and violence than he can bring against us. And it is because we are afraid that we cannot do this in time, or that, if we succeed, we shall in the end only bring destruction to ourselves as well as to our enemy, that we are convulsed with horror and overwhelmed with despair. Our materialistic faith has found us out.

But there is another philosophy of life which has no such consequence of woe. I refer to that faith which is founded upon a spiritual as contrasted with a material interpretation of reality. It is this faith which dares to assert that there are forces in this universe which cannot be seen, or felt, or measured, but which are none the less potent. There is an outer world of force, no doubt about that; but there is also an inner world of sentiment, wherein are energies which are decisive in human affairs. Love, generosity, compassion, forgiveness, good will—these are powers which *do* things among men. These are themselves forces which effect the course of destiny. We call them imponderables because they cannot be weighed, intangibles because they cannot be touched. But we feel their presence, as we feel the presence of the sun; we see their operation, as we see the operation of the wind; we know their power, as we know the power of the sea. They are the spirit of man—his morale, his idealism, his purpose—more potent than iron or steel, electricity or dynamite. What this spirit is, we do not know; but of its reality we are sure.

Only religion penetrates the mystery and calls it God. It is God within us, his life within our lives, his omnipotence to clothe us and engird us. How shall we protect ourselves, and save the things that are precious to our lives? How shall we confront tyranny, and resist oppression? Not by force and violence, and arms and blood, but by compassion, and mercy, and brotherhood and love. Not by fighting and killing, but by serving and dying. The prophet has spoken the word, echoed by every religion of mankind—"Not by power, nor by might, but by my spirit, saith the Lord!"

To the majority of men, dominated by a purely materialistic philosophy, all this may seem mere superstition. To refuse to take up arms against a man like Hitler, and to rely thus upon purely spiritual devices to resist his aggression, is fanaticism of the worst description. And so it may seem—until you consult the record of history! That record, as I read it, shows forth but a single lesson—that the works of the sword are temporal, while the works of the spirit are eternal.

See how the conquerors have come and gone, the empires risen and fallen! The greatest soldiers have ruled but a few years; the mightiest empires endured but a few centuries. Not all the power of the world could save them. But Buddha established his rule of pity and non-violence more than twenty-five hundred years ago, and it is stronger today than ever. The Jews proclaimed their holy law of "love to God and love to man" four thousand years ago, and not all the persecutions and pogroms of the ages could destroy them. Christianity organized its gospel of non-resistant love two thousand years ago, and it still endures as the mightiest influence of our day. And now appears a new conqueror, who lays all men under his feet, and threatens at last a universal conquest. But why should we think his sword more potent to endure than that of Alexander, Caesar or Napoleon? Why should we imagine that his empire will last the thousand years of which he boasts? There is a spirit in the world that dooms him. "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers," says the Psalmist, "neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity, For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Here is the answer to our question—how may we overcome the world, and therewith survive the horrors of this hour. It is the climax and conclusion, is it not, of all that I have been saying to you this morning. I laid down, first, a rule of action—to be busy in doing something about the evils of this day, that our absorption in our work may calm our nerves. Secondly, I emphasized a point of view, the long-range point of view, that may set these times in the perspective of eternity. Thirdly, I laid down a lesson of experience—that suffering is not in vain, since it is the vicarious medium of salvation. And, lastly, I presented a vision of faith—faith in the power of the spirit, resident in man's soul as the living witness of God's presence, to stand victorious over the material forces of this world. With such weapons at our disposal, we have no need to seek escape from the horrors of this hour. We can meet them, and overcome them, and therewith prove the fiber of our manhood.

Do you recall Arthur Hugh Clough's poem, "Hope Evermore"?

> Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en as thy thought
> So are the things that thou see'st; e'en as thy hope and belief.
> Cowardly are thou and timid? they rise to provoke thee against them;
> Hast thou courage? Enough, see them exulting to yield . . .
>
> Fear not, retire not, O man, hope evermore and believe.
> Go from the east to the west, as the sun and the stars direct thee,
> Go with the girdle of man, go and encompass the earth . . .
> Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition and action,
> With the great girdle of God, go and encompass the earth.

Too many people think human endeavor and intelligence are enough. We must also have a sensitiveness to the presence of God. We must not only say; we must also believe. The real test is in the quality of love. What a high privilege it is to realize that you are a sovereign in your own life! It is given to you unhampered and unhindered by any man. Edgar F. Romig.

Peacetime Conscription—'for God and Country'

By Henry Hitt Crane

IN the current issue of the newsmagazine *Time* a monumental fact is reported with characteristic "curt, clear, complete" brevity: "Last week Congress passed the conscription bill. This week the President signed it. *A new thing had entered U. S. life:* although the U. S. had conscripted its citizens in two wars, *never before had it conscripted them in peace.* Some 16,000,000 men, aged 21 to 36, forthwith became liable to compulsory military service. How, when, whether conscription would actually touch them was prescribed in (1) the bill, and (2) the selective system *which the Army and Navy had long since prepared against a martial day.*" (Italics mine.)

So it is here: peacetime conscription! The unbelievable has again come to pass. "The land of the free, and the home of the brave" has actually been frightened into a confused consent to submit to a brand of bondage the menacing meaning of which the average American citizen cannot begin to comprehend. A new thing *has* entered United States life, indeed! A more radical departure from our national tradition, a more positive defiance of basic principles of authentic democracy, could scarcely be conceived. The adoption of a device more utterly characteristic of dictatorship could hardly be proposed. Peacetime conscription is the very essence of totalitarianism. And yet, incredible as it seems, our own Congress has deliberately adopted it by a vote of about two to one in each house. A new thing has entered United States life—with a vengeance.

OPPOSITION WIDESPREAD—BUT FUTILE

This amazing innovation was not brought to pass without grave misgivings on the part of all alert Americans. There was widespread opposition, intelligent and articulate, but ineffective. The President, the military and most of the metropolitan press, by skillful manipulation of the psychology of emergency proved more powerful than the people. The exploitation of the panic produced by the astounding victories of Hitler's mechanized conscripts was too great an opportunity to miss. The Administration, with an election coming on, and with many unsolved domestic problems insistently and increasingly clamoring for solution, yielded to the time-worn temptation to take the easy, temporary way out. And the general staff of the army and navy, who, through its commission of ninety-five officers, had been carefully planning for such an emergency since 1926 (long before Hitler had been heard of), recognized that its long-looked-for hour had arrived. Together with the press they played up the terrifying threat of invasion, and demanded immediate "domestic" defense. "Fifty thousand airplanes, vast armament, the world's largest sea force, and millions of trained men to operate the war machine must be had immediately—or else! It is an emergency demand," they declared. "Hitler must be stopped. There is only one way to do it: fire must be fought with fire; evil with evil, dictatorship with dictatorship, conscription with conscription."

To the man on the street it all seemed quite obvious, and inevitable. And who could fail to feel the force of such a line of logic, particularly when we are confronted with such incredible, fear-engendering ruthlessness and devastation as now threaten civilization? As the President declares, "We cannot remain indifferent to the philosophy of force now rampant in the world. The terrible fate of nations whose weakness invited attack is too well known to us."

So, "a new thing has come into U. S. life"—peacetime conscription. The army-made plans are now in operation. The billions of dollars asked for have been appropriated. We are preparing for war on a scale never before dreamed of. And what we prepare for, we get!

IF WAR COMES, WHAT TO DO?

Most loyal Americans, I believe, feel that since Congress has spoken we should all make the best of it, play the game according to the rules prescribed, and thus try to bring as much good as possible out of a most unfortunate, not to say tragic, situation. Even the "Liberty Leaguers," who in the days of prohibition so flagrantly and with such impunity flouted, not only an act of Congress, but a Constitutional Amendment, must feel that in the present emergency their boasted technique is hardly appropriate. They might resent conscription for the sake of the security of sobriety, but hardly for such national defense measures as well organized methods of mass murder. Defiance of the law of the land on behalf of personal indulgence might be one thing; refusal to register will surely prove to be quite another. Certainly if the bootleggers and their patrons of yesterday try their same subversive methods now, and if for the sake of their miserable self-interest they again attempt to sabotage or obstruct the legal action of our government, then they should immediately be recognized for what they are—Fifth Columnists, Trojan Horsemen, traitors. With all such unscrupulous and subversive activities, decent patriots, to say nothing of sincere Christians, cannot possibly have anything to do. They should be renounced, they and all their ways, even as we renounce the devil and all his.

If there are those who do not like any law of this land, who think it is unwise, untimely, undemocratic or unjust, they are guaranteed the right to seek to change such a law by securing enough votes to gain a majority in the law-making body. They are not, however, guaranteed the right deliberately to disobey a law they dislike. And should they break the law, even for conscience' sake, they must be prepared to suffer the consequences and accept the prescribed penalties.

Now there are many who do not like the present draft law. General Hugh S. Johnson, in his column in the *Detroit Times* of September 20, declared: "I

never realized until receiving some of my more recent mail and this present western trip, how bitter, resentful and widespread is the opposition to the draft—both of the National Guard and of this selective service." What are these to do? Obviously, in such a democracy as ours it always has been, and presumably is now, not only the right, but the duty of such to express themselves against the law, and try by legitimate means to have it modified or abrogated. The effectiveness of their protests will naturally and inevitably depend largely upon the reasonableness and rightness of their objections.

UNNECESSARY, UNDEMOCRATIC, DANGEROUS

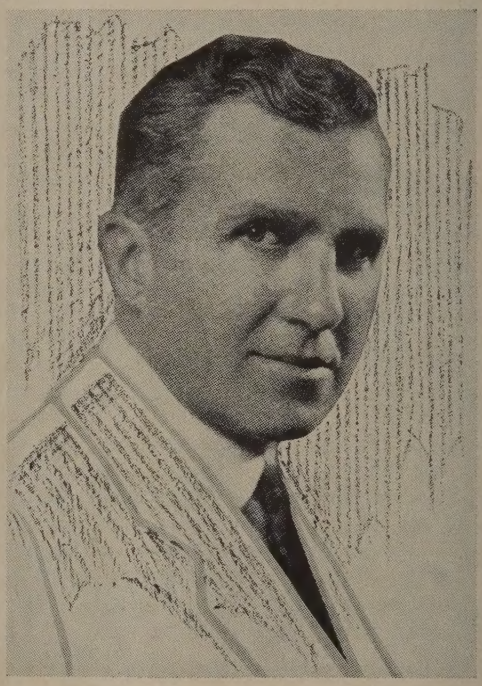
First of all, there are some who feel that peacetime conscription is *not necessary* for the building up of our military forces for adequate national defense. They insist that the system of voluntary enlistment has not been fairly attempted or even explored. Mr. H. H. Woodring, until recently Secretary of War, emphatically asserts that this is the case. If we are really concerned with the defense of our own land, and not the whole Western hemisphere, the voluntary method of meeting the present crisis would be quite adequate, it is contended. But domestic defense is obviously but a modest phase of our program. "Hemisphere defense" is the real objective. And though the President might promise not to send our troops to Europe, he may well be planning to send them eventually to Mexico, Brazil, the Argentine, and even into Canada, to "defend" them. And should these countries demur in acquiescing in our noble purpose of "defending" them, we must be prepared to take them into "protective custody"—on the principle that if they do not know what is good for them, we do. In short, it is the conviction of not a few that we are being conscripted into a new imperialism —"necessary" and "inevitable" expansion.

Others feel that whether the foregoing is true or not, this peacetime conscription law is utterly, and even disastrously, *undemocratic,* that it is bound to alter profoundly, and for the worse, our whole structure of life, foisting upon us the most vicious element of totalitarianism. Hon. Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, speaking before the Senate in opposition to this bill (August 13, 1940), made this direful statement: "Enact peacetime conscription and no longer will this be a free land. . . . Labor and industry, men and women, will be shackled by the chains they have themselves forged; and all this, mark you, while this last great democracy is at peace. Is this the sort of society for which our forebears shed their blood? Is this the goal for which we strive? . . . If you pass this bill, you slit the throat of the last democracy still living; you accord to Hitler his greatest and cheapest victory to date. On the headstone of American democracy he will inscribe: 'Here lies the foremost victim of the war of nerves.' "

'DRAFTEES OF THE DIVINE'

But most important of all, it seems to me, is the objection of those who feel that it is profoundly *dangerous,* to many it is downright iniquitous, because it is the beginning of the final stage of the development of the dogma of nationalism; namely, that it, the state, has supreme authority over the individual. Indeed, the assumption is that the nation has supremacy in everything. Whatever the state considers right, must be right, and whatever it decides the individual should do, he must do. That *is* a new thing in this country—peacetime conscription, of the country, for the country.

But we seem to forget. Peacetime conscription—for God! is not new. The fact is, it is the oldest, most potent and abiding principle of life this nation has known. Indeed, these United States came into being largely because of it, and certainly in unequivocal deference to it. Our Founding Fathers were peacetime



HENRY HITT CRANE

conscripts of God! Draftees of the Divine! And the great, creative, unconquerable spirits who have made this land what it is, in terms of its best, have all recognized that supreme allegiance of man belongs never to a nation, but to God alone! Freedom of conscience, liberty to live in terms of the highest one knows, untrammeled opportunity to obey God—peacetime conscription, no less! And all religion that has great ethical reality does to its draftees precisely what Christianity did to the apostles of old when they were asked or ordered to do anything contrary to what they believed their Lord commanded. "We must obey God rather than man!" they declared. Any man who really gets a grip on God soon recognizes that it is nothing other than an awareness of God's grip on him—conscripting him to live in terms of the best he knows.

The top glory of democracy, in sharp contradistinction to dictatorship everywhere, is its frank and full acknowledgment of the fact that supreme loyalty belongs alone to him who is above all nations. And one

of the surest proofs that a democracy, as such, is doomed, may always be found in any curtailment of such acknowledgment. When the state begins to play god, dictatorship is aborning. Thus one of the deepest needs of our nation is men whose supreme allegiance is to God and their own consciences, for these are the truest defenders of our democracy. And those willing to defy the nation in the highest interests of the nation are its most authentic patriots.

There is marked significance in the fact that the only flag that is ever allowed to be floated above the stars and stripes is the white flag of God. That is a valid symbol of what ought eternally to be true about our consciences. "One is your Master, even Christ"—peacetime conscripts, for God.

WHEN CHRISTIANS DISAGREE

Fortunately, our new national conscription law recognizes the existence of this vastly older conscription. "Nothing contained in this act," it reads, "shall be construed to require any person to be subject to combatant training and service in the land or naval forces of the United States who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form." Which, by the way, is a worthy advance over the draft law of the last war.

But the issue is most clearly stated, perhaps, by the official declaration of our own Methodist Church, which states: "The Christian is bound to serve his own nation in all ways that are compatible with the Christian faith and the Christian way of life; but his supreme allegiance is to God. . . . the state and nation belong to the sphere of relative, earthly values. God alone is absolute, and he alone has a claim to our unconditional loyalty." Obviously, if this means anything, it means resisting the claim of the totalitarian state, any totalitarian state, to supreme allegiance.

As might be expected in this confused world, however, there is not complete unanimity, even among Christians, as to what loyalty to God actually means. On the one hand, there are the pacifists, the conscientious objectors, those who believe war and preparation for war is a flat denial of the command of God and a tragic repudiation of the Way of the Cross of Christ. These feel they cannot sanction, bless or participate in war in any form.

On the other hand, there are those who feel that they are morally bound to go to war if ordered to do so by the state, believing that there are situations in which war becomes the lesser of two evils, and that, when forced to choose between them, they must, as Christians, choose that lesser.

MAINTAINING THE FELLOWSHIP

It is not a very pleasant fact to have to face—that on this life and death issue Christians are not agreed. But face it we must, and instead of allowing it to split the church, engender bitterness and enmity between followers of Christ who are unquestionably equally sincere and desirous of doing what they believe to be right, we must above all else "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." If Christians cannot at very least retain such fellowship as will hold us together in a family tie that cannot be broken no matter how differently we interpret the will of God, then nothing but irretrievable disaster awaits not only the church, but the world itself. Christians must learn to be able to disagree as well as to agree—in love. No matter what the temptation, regardless of the tension inevitably created by a war situation that makes all men feel so intensely and irrationally, we must not begin calling names, indulging in invective, anathematizing, excommunicating each other. If the love of our Christ cannot constrain us to maintain our fellowship regardless of the divisive forces in the world, from whence *can* any redemptive influence come?

The great Oxford Conference of Christians from all over the world, representing forty-three nations and one hundred and nineteen denominations, made this declaration: "The Church should honor the conscientious decisions of its members, whether they are led to participate in, or abstain from, war; and should maintain with all alike the full fellowship of the Body of Christ."

Because the great majority of church members will doubtless support any war that the government directs the people to enter, it may be well to suggest some of the major contributions we have a right to expect from the conscientious objectors to the whole war system. Those Christians who are not "C.O.'s" may very easily fail to see any value at all in their pacifist brethren's attitude and behavior. And the "C.O.'s" themselves, when misrepresented, maligned and mistreated as they most certainly will be as the war mania increases, may very easily fail to keep clearly in mind the nature and worth of the witness they needs must bear, if they are to be true to themselves and to the way of the Master as they understand it.

KEEPING FAITH WITH ONE'S CONVICTIONS

First of all, when compromise is not only condoned, but is considered wise and necessary; when expediency is accepted as the only realistic and practical principle of procedure; when vows of faith in and allegiance to right, truth and good will are being laid aside "for the duration of the war," or repudiated altogether, at such a time more than any other, there must be some who will unflinchingly hold fast to their ideals and unfalteringly keep faith with their convictions, regardless of consequences. Who but the conscripts of God should play such an indispensable role? Lest all the world forget the operation of those fundamental and unalterable, though often obscure, laws of a moral universe, there must be those who will keep reminding us of their validity and inviolability.

"There is but one way to achieve good results, and that is by fulfilling none but ethical conditions! The methods adopted inevitably determine the quality of the objective attained! To do wrong, even under the plea of 'necessity,' is never an escape from nor a solution of any difficulty; it is merely an enhancement of its power to develop greater distress. What we sow, that we shall also reap. The law of the harvest operates in the moral realm as surely as in the physical. It never fails.

God is not mocked." Somebody must keep saying all that, lest we become hopelessly seduced with the lies that blind and bind. Who but the conscripts of God will do it?

In the second place, when everywhere men and nations are boasting, bragging and bluffing, claiming to be clean, virtuous and noble in their motives and purposes; insisting on the justice of their cause, and their own blamelessness for their sad predicament; and assuming such sinlessness as would justify casting not only the first stone, but the last bomb as well—at such times, somebody must be decently honest enough to admit his share of the universal guilt, to show some signs of sincere humiliation, to repent in dead earnest, and to cry out to Almighty God for forgiveness, mercy and help. We are all guilty in some degree, and so long as we strive as strenuously to point out the motes in the eyes of others, particularly our enemies, we cannot cast out the beam from our own. It is not easy to cry out, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!"—not easy, but necessary, and who but the conscripts of God will do it?

CONTINUING WITNESS FOR DEMOCRACY

In the third place, when the tragic trend toward totalitarianism is threatening to overwhelm the world, not only by its ruthless violence, but even more effectively by its persistent, persuasive propaganda, there must be those who do more than mouth the dogmas of democracy and at the same time deny the right to practice them; there must be those who *believe* in democracy so deeply and so intelligently that they will continue to uphold the basic constitutional guarantees *"quand meme"*—in spite of everything. This, too, is the task of the draftees of the Divine.

"You cannot save democracy by fighting for it abroad and scuttling it at home. Its surest defense is the sincere and unselfish extension of its principles in industry, business, education and social relations generally—actually practicing what we preach. The state exists for the welfare of the individual, not the individual for the state. Civil liberties are infinitely more valuable than military victories. Issues are settled far more permanently by ballots than by bullets. The rights of the minority must be preserved as determinedly as the rule of the majority. Those in high office and low are the servants of the people, not their masters. Unconstitutional usurpation of authority, whatever the excuse, is the surest sign of infection with the disease of dictatorship." Somebody must keep saying all that, too, and with most voices silent, the witness of those under orders of their God must be maintained.

SEEKING THE CHRISTIAN 'WAY OUT'

In the fourth place, when fear, suspicion, hate, vengeance and violence are unleashed, and their awful havoc is everywhere in evidence; when desperate men are crying out that there is nothing else to do but to meet murder with more murder, and destruction with utter devastation—at such times there must be those who, though they be but voices crying in the wilderness, will yet cry out that there *is* another way, the *only* way out, the Way of Him who marked it out with his life and confirmed his truth with a Cross. "This is the way! Walk ye in it! They that take the sword shall perish by the sword! Return good for evil! Love your enemies! Pray for them that persecute you! Do good to them that despitefully use you!" Somebody has to keep repeating all that—it is the only gospel of salvation. And what is more, somebody has to practice these principles—not tomorrow, but now. And that is the supreme task of the conscripts of Christ.

Lastly, when defeat and utter despair demand surrender or death; when military might has failed and the more expert mass murderer claims victory; when the leaders and generals see that there is no chance of winning and therefore insist on surrender "because further resistance is futile"—then what is to be done? "Nothing more *can* be done," says the military philosophy. "You must bow to the inevitable—capitulate, quit, and do as you are told by your conqueror."

But the conscript of God says no. The very essence of his whole philosophy now becomes evident and reveals itself to be the only adequate technique of defense available. "Never surrender!" says he. "Resist to the death! Refuse to yield—whatever the consequences. There is no such thing as defeat unless you capitulate within. No man can conquer you and make you do his will unless you prefer slavery to death. If you really believe in your way of life, *die* rather than live another way. Seek to save your skin by surrendering your way of life and you've lost life itself. Lose your physical existence rather than surrender Christ's way of life, and even as a seed falls into the ground and dies, that larger life may come forth, so shall it be with you!" We need all that said, too—until at last some one nation, at least, shall heed and obey—and become unconquerable.

The Way of God

WHERE will God lead us? . . . What he will do is to give to those who humbly ask the spirit that no dangers can disturb.

The Christian message to the world brings peace in war; peace where we most need it; peace of soul.

It is that same Christian message which makes its giver, who is God, the best Friend. . . . And there is one thing we can all do—soldiers, sailors, airmen and civilians; men, women and children, all together—which may be much more powerful than we know. And that is to pray.

I heard the other day of a Yorkshire village where after all the talk about a fifth column the people had agreed to form a sixth column, in which they pledged themselves to try and give a few minutes each day in God's house to prayer.

But prayer is not only asking God for what we want, but rather the way to learn to trust him, to ask that we may know his will and do it with all our strength. If we really do our work, whatever it is, as well as we can in God's sight, it will become his work, and we can safely leave the issue in his hands.

LORD HALIFAX.

The Philosophy of Christian Stewardship

By Mark A. Dawber

I HAVE been assigned a most difficult subject. I have been pondering the question, and I have arrived at the place where I am ready to say that it is perhaps impossible to talk about the philosophy of Christian stewardship unless one is an incurable dogmatist. To talk about a philosophy of Christian stewardship will be difficult enough, but this I shall endeavor to do.

According to the dictionary, philosophy is a reasoned science; another definition that is given is, practical wisdom; yet another is the knowledge of the causes of all phenomena, both of mind and matter.

At first it seems difficult, if not impossible, to fit the interests of Christian stewardship into any one of these categories, but a combination of these definitions would seem to make it possible. So I am thinking of a philosophy of Christian stewardship as a reasoned science that will take cognizance of the phenomena of mind and matter that are necessary to the practice of Christian stewardship. At least this will provide enough latitude in which to discuss the subject.

Of course, any philosophy of life to be Christian must be based upon the life and teachings of Jesus. Jesus himself was the embodiment of a philosophy of stewardship. In this he remains the world's greatest stewardship teacher. His position and place are unique. The passing centuries bear witness to his ever increasing influence among men. His was a stewardship of life; and as his precepts are embodied in human lives, civilization advances to nobler ideals and higher types. Great thinkers are attracted to his imperial personality, the philosophers of the ages pause to reflect upon his wonderful teaching and his amazing life, and this can be accounted for in the main because he had a philosophy of stewardship that motivated his every act and thought.

STEWARDSHIP, NOT OWNERSHIP

The one outstanding thing to me in the life of the Master was his sense of stewardship as against ownership—responsibility rather than rights—duty as against demands. This stewardship was based upon a set of values that were new in the world. Christianity is peculiar in this regard. Jesus gave to the world a new sense and a new set of values, and these began with himself: a new sense of divinity, as belonging to God, of having something of God within us; this was particularly and peculiarly strong in Jesus and I think without any disrespect to the prophets and seers who appeared before him, one can truthfully say that this sense of values appeared for the first time in the world with the coming of Jesus. It is because of this that I am constrained to say that we stewardship people must be careful not to put too much emphasis upon the stewardship teachings of the Old Testament. They are good and should be used, but they are based upon an entirely different set of values than those to which I have just referred, and upon which in my judgment Christian stewardship must be founded.

Jesus had a profound sense of responsibility for himself, that he was an instrument in the hands of God to be used in the salvation of the world, that he must therefore be about his Father's business. This sense of stewardship appeared very early in his life. It was so strange and exceptional that his own parents could not understand it. He could not afford to waste his time on trivial things. There was big Kingdom business to be done and his life was but a stewardship in the process. This is the starting place in any philosophy of Christian stewardship.

STEWARDSHIP OF SELF

So too must it be with us. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God." "And if children, then heirs [or stewards]; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." We have inherited this divine stewardship. It is the consciousness of this value as inherent in ourselves that lends dignity, also humility, to life. Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, in his book, *In Quest of Life's Meaning,* says: "When a man comes face to face with Christ and with a vision of the life Christ believes it possible for him to lead, three things inevitably follow: the experience enormously purifies and elevates his own ideal of himself; it greatly intensifies his realization of how far short he is now falling of a decent approach to what he might be; it creates in him a great passion to bridge that gap—a passion that the man he is should become that man he has seen so clearly in the vision." This is the very essence of stewardship and, if I may say so, the element most lacking, but the one most needful in any philosophy of stewardship. The implications of this as the starting place are too evident to require much amplification here, but it might be well to state them briefly because of their bearing upon everything else we shall present.

There is first the new vision of what this corporate human life of ours might be if men would live as God intended they should and as they are perfectly capable of living, as brothers and sisters, with the relationships of life dominated by cooperation, trust and mutual regard. Second, an awakening to the hopelessly cheap imitation the life of our world offers, with its materialism, its jealousy, its pettiness, its strife, its selfishness, its sin. Third, a great surging desire to enlist in the job of making over the life of society into the brotherhood of men it might and should be. The vision of this world as it might be—that is precisely what we mean by the Kingdom of God.

If this contact with Christ does not achieve within us this sense of stewardship, then something has gone astray and we need to recover it. The tragedy of so much of our church membership lies in this failure to value our own lives and the lack of a deep consciousness of responsibility as stewards of our own lives. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price."

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel, thy brother? And, he said, I know not. Am I my brother's

keeper?" This question from ancient writ is still an imperative for our generation, and the answer is all too common even in our day. To be sure, there is a benevolence abroad in the world that is encouraging, but the deeper sense of responsibility for others is sadly lacking. Someone has made the observation that I am not necessarily my brother's keeper, but I am my brother's brother and this relationship is infinitely more important. A philosophy of Christian stewardship must certainly include this relationship as one of the great imperatives. Any life that claims to have been mastered by the principle of the sacredness of life and personality is immediately confronted with the further principle of the social and spiritual solidarity of all men. The question that Christian stewardship presents to us in this regard is: Confronting the conditions of present-day society, with its contempt for life and its denial of social obligation, how shall we act?

THE STEWARDSHIP OF OTHERS

To see a world in which we are now able to produce the necessities of life for all people, without any great burden of toil and fear, wholesomely and abundantly, for as long as the desire to live is in us, and then to remind ourselves that all this possible freedom, all this power and abundance remain for us no more than a possibility, is, to say the least, disappointing. There is a sense of profound instability about these achievements of our race. Even those who enjoy, enjoy without security; and for the great multitude of mankind, there is neither ease, plenty nor freedom. Heavy tasks, terrific burdens, insufficiency and unending money worries are still the ordinary stuff of life. Over every human being hangs the threat of war as man has never before known. War, armed and reinforced by all the powers and discoveries of modern science, has made mockery of any real human achievement.

Society solidarity and social responsibility are imperatives in any philosophy of Christian stewardship. So long as human beings are thought of and treated as things to be hired and fired, labor and life to be bought and sold, just so long will there be exploitation of human life, for so long as we own a man's way of life we own the man.

It becomes necessary for Christians to enlarge the sense of social stewardship. Religion must more and more be conceived of as a social force. Religion must be socially efficient in order that personal religion may survive. The final test of religion will be at the point of its social efficiency; the Kingdom of God will be the consummation. It is not necessarily identified with any special social theory. It will of course involve justice, freedom, fellowship, work and play. Each social system will contribute some value, but the paramount contribution will be religion.

Christian stewardship will demand an inquiry into all forms and systems of society that injure men and women, that make it impossible for men and women to achieve the highest status of human life.

There are five clear demands that Christianity makes upon life and that must be applied as the test of any system: (1) That men shall live in peace and harmony, as groups in the community, in the nation and the world. (2) That men shall be able to achieve the abundant life. (3) That life shall be lived creatively. (4) That the sacredness of personality shall be respected. (5) That life shall be lived unselfishly.

These are a few of the measuring rods of our social responsibility and a philosophy of Christian stewardship must include a deep underlying social consciousness as a religious imperative. The vicarious suffering of the Master was the exemplification of this principle.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES

A philosophy of Christian stewardship must include the ideal and conviction of the conservation of natural resources and a Christian social responsibility for them. America—and farmers in particular—need desperately a quickening of the conscience as to the sin of robbing or wasting the soil. The church needs to be reminded that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." One has great difficulty in believing this as he looks around and sees the destruction and waste and terrible exploitation that have taken place. This greed and graft of exploitation will continue so long as man continues to believe that he is the owner rather than the steward of land.

Our stewardship of the soil is a most demanding religious responsibility. Rural religion and the country church must help to give this stewardship emphasis. A new farmer is in the making in rural America. He is the husbandman whom someone has described as a farmer who is "married to the soil." He will treat the soil with a sacred consideration as he realizes that in it lies the basis of the continuity of the race; that civilization depends upon it; that within its bosom lie all those resources with which God expects to work out his purposes in the world so far as physical sustenance is concerned. The new farmer will be made to realize that, while he may hold legal title to his farm, he does not really own it. He will come to see that he is bound to think of generations yet unborn who must live on the land after he has done with it, that farming is a partnership with God. It is also a partnership between man and the soil to the end of making the earth yield her full increase for the good of all.

'THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S'

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "And God called the dry land earth." "And God said, let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit of their kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth and it was so." "And God saw that it was good." Thus begins the divine story of the earth in the first chapter of Genesis. It sets forth in exquisite language the facts of the "Holy Earth" and man's inescapable obligation to respect and reverence the soil.

Nothing less than a conception of the soil as a holy thing will restore it to its proper place in society. It is not sufficient to think of it only in terms of economic determinism; that is important, but it is not enough. It will not suffice to say with Professor Tugwell: "I think it is fair to say that intelligence of the land is the

first criterion of any civilization." Such a conception is also important and a very timely utterance for our generation. But from the point of view of the church, and considered as a basic spiritual interest, we must go further. We must create a sense of reverence for it. This is the first command of the Old Testament. The second part of this command tells man to "subdue the earth." But before man can do this, he must first subdue and discipline himself; only then can he apprehend this marvelous world, which God called "good" when he created it. As man obeys this command, he finds that

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out of the good earth's rich treasuries of field and forest, mine and quarry, lake, river, sea and air, he can get every material thing in sufficient abundance to satisfy his every need.

SOIL STEWARDSHIP A NATIONAL CONCERN

The problem of soil erosion has serious human consequences. Much has been said in recent years about soil erosion and its frightful cost, and elaborate programs have been set in motion to deal with this too long neglected question. But it must always be considered in the light of the parallel problem of human erosion. This is even more costly to the nation and of all the institutions that are affected by it the church suffers the most serious loss. Various factors enter into this problem of human erosion but none is more important than the factor of soil erosion. An eroded soil always means an eroded people. Christians must be made to feel more deeply a social and spiritual responsibility for this problem of soil erosion and the conservation of natural resources. The proper use of the land, governed by a sense of holy stewardship, will go far toward the solution of the present economic and social conflict and unrest. Substitute the service motive for the grasping profit motive, and land use becomes the healing power for many of our social ills.

The depletion of the soil by cropping, leaching and erosion is one of the most stubborn problems before the nation. Stewardship of the soil then is a matter of spiritual importance. "Ye are God's husbandmen." The Bible is so rich in teachings of rural stewardship that it would seem a reasonable expectation that Christians should be informed on this important subject. A philosophy of Christian stewardship must include this consideration in the hope that more of us will study these teachings, take the Word of God seriously and put it into practice. If we should do this we might expect to see something of the new heaven and the new earth—the Kingdom of God here and now among men, for the coming of which our Lord bade us to pray.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF DEMOCRACY

I suppose that the introduction of democracy as an imperative in a philosophy of Christian stewardship is something new under the sun, yet I am profoundly impressed with the validity and necessity of its inclusion. In this I am not thinking of democracy as a political ideal alone or primarily; it is that of course, but it must be something else before it can be that in any vital sense. I am thinking of democracy as a dynamic spiritual principle. If it is not this primarily, then democracy as a political principle is sure to fail. This is the reason for the present plight in democratic government, both at home and abroad. Just now, on this American continent we have a better chance—perhaps I should say the only chance—that is left to a people to preserve it, to restore it to its spiritual quality, and thus save it as a force in the government of free peoples.

Democracy is a spiritual legacy; and for such Christians have a stewardship responsibility. This, I suspect, has been one of the most neglected aspects of the stewardship task. This continent has been blessed as has no other part of the world. We are at peace in a war-torn world. We are blessed with a bountiful soil, a salubrious climate, with a vast wealth of natural resources in excess of all the needs of our people. I wonder whether this should not mean something to us in terms of Christian stewardship. We have bread enough and to spare. On this continent we have some 30 people for every cultivated acre of land; in Germany an acre of land must support 470; in Italy 700; in Japan, 2,000. No wonder they must resort to totalitarianism; no wonder they must go to war and do hateful things. This war business will never be solved by fighting but by sharing. This is true both at home and abroad. Economic democracy must now be applied or else political democracy is doomed. Christian stewardship is a prerequisite to economic democracy.

Here the people rule, or may rule if they are sufficiently interested. Here, in spite of indifference and apathy and political exploitation and chicanery, democracy still works—sometimes as I have already suggested in spite of us rather than because of us. Here, when government fails to function in accordance with

the will of the people, they can still change it. I repeat—this is our spiritual legacy, its political significance is secondary. Democracy as we have it is primarily the result of a concept of God. Democracy is a way of life that determines a form of government; all other ideologies—nazism, fascism, communism—are forms of government that determine a way of life, and there is all the difference in the world between these two concepts of government.

THE SPIRITUAL LEGACY OF DEMOCRACY

Christianity and democracy need each other if either is to survive and make its best contribution to the world. The greatest contribution that we can make at this moment of world crisis is to strengthen the spiritual foundations of our democracy in order that we may help the world in a program of democratic reconstruction when the opportunity arrives, as it surely will.

This will not be accomplished by mere flag waving, 100 per cent Americanism, superpatriotism—or even by the Dies Committee. No, we must go deeper down than these things, we must dig down to the spiritual roots. The glory and greatness of this American continent lies not in its vast territory, not in its abundant natural resources, not in the rivers it has bridged or the mountains it has leveled, not in its scientific progress, its industry or its material wealth; these things are but dust and ashes and may perish in the night. The greatness of this continent lies in the character of its people, which has been made possible by its democratic liberty to think and to act and to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. But if we forget that this liberty is not man-made but came by the touch of a benign Creator, if we forget that God who has made us great through service, then we shall lose our heritage, the billows of God's righteous judgment will flow over us, and we shall be no more.

> If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
> Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
> Such boasting as the Gentiles use
> Or lesser breeds without the law:
> Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
> Lest we forget, lest we forget.

Democracy, too, is our high privilege and our spiritual stewardship.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF GETTING

Closely allied with all we have said is the stewardship of getting. What we get and how we get it is of greater significance in any philosophy of Christian stewardship than what we give and how we give. All the giving in the world, no matter how generous and unselfish, can never make up for the getting, if the getting of what we give is an utter violation of Christian ethics and a Christian economic morality. Moreover, the techniques of acquisition are equally important in the consideration of this question. The best social ends in the world can never justify unchristian and unsocial means. The best and most generous giving can never repair the injury of selfish, exploitative, unchristian getting.

In his book, *Christian Materialism,* Bishop McConnell has a chapter devoted to this subject of getting that would well repay our careful study. The gist of the chapter is summed up in the following paragraph: "The moral duty resting upon men as a result of this function of society in creating values is to discover how to repay society or to discharge the obligation arising from the fact that a new value is enjoyed. If the value comes from society as a whole, the payment must be made to society as a whole. It would be hardly permissible, for example, for an individual to ask for individual gifts just because he is a member of society."

This is something new in the realm of stewardship but nonetheless it constitutes the touchstone of Christian responsibility. In this age of "something for nothing" which seems to have overtaken all of us, we should hardly be surprised at the fact that the church has fallen prey to this delusion, if not the sin, of wrongful getting. It has not been too careful to scrutinize the gifts that have been made to it, and even when the methods by which the gifts were secured by the donor were exposed as unchristian, the church has salved its conscience by the thought that the gifts would now be used toward a Christian and social end.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF GIVING

The element of giving has ever been uppermost in the stewardship program, but the spiritual significance of money has never been fully realized. Some years ago a Christian leader was severely criticized because he made the remark that the problem of the redemption of the world is a problem of money, but the fact remains that in a world where goods and services must be paid for in hard cash, this man was correct. The giving of money for the missionary work of the church is the chief method by which the world can be Christianized. The contributing of money for Christian service lies distinctly within the realm of unselfish benevolence, by which I mean giving which cannot bring forth any direct return to the giver. Yet here again I am afraid that much of modern giving is lacking a philosophy of Christian stewardship such as we are here advocating. We have so vulgarized and brutalized money by wrong uses that its spiritual significance is absent even when the money is rightly given for the high and noble purpose of missionary benevolence and social and religious service.

What is now needed is an educational program in which the giver may be brought to a more dynamic sense of its stewardship values. So much of our giving is divorced from the actual spiritual and social service that is made possible. To bridge this gulf is certainly an inescapable challenge to the stewardship agencies of the church.

In this regard there is also a new and increasing imperative to identify the giving with the giver. In his recent volume, *Believe the Heart,* Raymond Holden records his heroine, Leda Fillmore, as saying: "I've always thought of myself as something to give, not as something to hoard and be thrifty with." Such a sense of giving as a vital part of self would help to vitalize material gifts. To see in them *ourselves* as the major

contribution would not only make giving more meaningful, but it would do much to increase giving.

Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—
Himself, his hungering brother, and Me.

A word should also be said about prayer as related to giving as part of a philosophy of Christian stewardship. The familiar prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray is a model of prayer as related to giving and need. The second section of this prayer has to do with man's needs, his bread, his sins and his temptation. "Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil." Here we have the utter subordination of personal and private interest to the larger values, which is characteristic of all honest prayer as related to right action. The stewardship of giving must carry with it the element of prayer as necessary to spiritualizing our giving.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE CROSS

The most important factor in a philosophy of Christian stewardship is of course the dynamic of the Cross. This goes without saying. The sacrificial principle involved and the redemptive purpose that is the objective are the essence of all that Christianity stands for in the world. The Cross as a basic principle of stewardship must be more fully realized. The Cross as a social factor immediately implies the stewardship principle. Without a full, deep sense of the place and power of the Cross there can be no stewardship worthy the name. Paul was very conscious of this principle. "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise. So much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel." And again, "We are stewards of the mysteries of God." This mystery of the Cross as the redemptive purpose of God was central in his ministry. To Paul the task of preaching the gospel was a stewardship in which the Cross was ever the driving force.

The time has arrived when the Cross must be brought out of the realm of the symbolic and made realistic. It must become a reality in every phase of life. There is no other way by which the chaos of the present world situation can be changed. We are to be redeemers. We are stewards of the Cross. This is a bold claim, but it is thoroughly valid. God is depending upon us to carry out his program in the world. Christ in us is the hope—and this principle of the Cross contains a challenge to all who are conscious of leadership. The Cross had an incomparable value in putting the cause of Christianity before the world. It placed Jesus where mankind could never forget him. Once again we are called upon to exemplify his spirit and purpose in a stewardship of the Cross. "He that will come after me, let him take up his Cross and follow me."

Must Jesus bear the Cross alone
And all the world go free?
No there's a Cross for everyone
And there's a Cross for me.

Thanksgiving at Midnight

By Harold L. Lunger

At midnight I rise up to give thee thanks. Psalm 119:62. (Goodspeed).

"THIS is London, at seventeen minutes past midnight." Many times we have heard these words in recent months as we turned the dial for the latest news from Europe. And how freighted with meaning they are, with that great city under nightly black-out, lighted only by the flames of burning buildings and the probing fingers of anti-aircraft searchlights.

London of course is not the only place where the clock of humanity stands at midnight. It is so in Berlin, Warsaw, Paris, Copenhagen, Shanghai and many another world capital and crossroads village. Even in Washington one seems to hear the heavy mechanism in motion working up strength for the fatal stroke of twelve.

Stephen Vincent Benet gives us the picture:

We thought we were done of these things, but we were wrong.
. . .
Now the night rolls back on the West and the night is solid.

It is at such a midnight hour that custom prescribes a day of national thanksgiving. In their captivity the children of Israel cried out: "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Many today are asking with equal earnestness: "How can we give thanks to God in times like these?"

The psalmist, however, was able to say: "At midnight I rise up to give thee thanks?" Can we?

I

Many of our fellow countrymen this year will find it *too* easy to be grateful. They will offer fervent thanks that they are Americans, and not as other men.

As far back as the Thanksgiving season of 1937 one of the national press services prepared a pictorial composite which was widely used throughout the country. It was entitled: "America Can Still be Thankful."

In the first picture, one saw a Chinese mother with her child, sitting on the bundle which contained all their earthly possessions. The caption read: "China—Refugees from Bombs." The second picture was an election poster, dominated by the face of Mussolini. Its legend: "Italy—All Good Men Vote 'Yes.'" The third portrayed a sea of hands raised in the nazi salute. The title: "Germany—You Salute . . . Or Else!" The fourth pictured a mother wearing a gas mask and fitting one to the face of a little girl. "England—Rehearsal for War." The fifth illustration was of a pile of sandbags, ten or twelve feet high, in front of a business building. "Spain—Business Behind Barricades." The large picture which predominated in the whole layout was of an unemployed man, wearing hat and overcoat, eating at a relief center. The words accompanying this picture pointed out the moral of the whole:

"In America hundreds of persons, like this man, will eat Thanksgiving dinner only by the grace of charity. This isn't life at its best, but *things could be worse.* A glance around the world suggests some reasons why American still can be thankful."

A glance around the world today would lift our peace and well-being into even more striking relief than the same exercise in 1937. When we think of the plight of the people of Norway and Denmark, Belgium and Holland, France and England, Germany and Italy, China and Japan, we see abundant reasons why we here in America can still be thankful. If we wish to be like the Pharisee, we can indeed stand up in the temple and say: "O God, I thank thee that I am not like other men"—hungry, homeless, living under the cruel shadow of war.

But is there not something sub-Christian in such thanksgiving? The distinguishing characteristic of Jesus was the way he took upon himself the burdens of others. He was continually identifying himself with the least and the lost. Their burdens were his burdens, their hungers his hunger, their sorrows his sorrow, their fears his fear. Can you imagine him rejoicing because his neighbors' or his enemies' plight was worse than his? The words of Eugene Debs reveal the spirit that was in Jesus and should be in all who hear his name: "While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free."

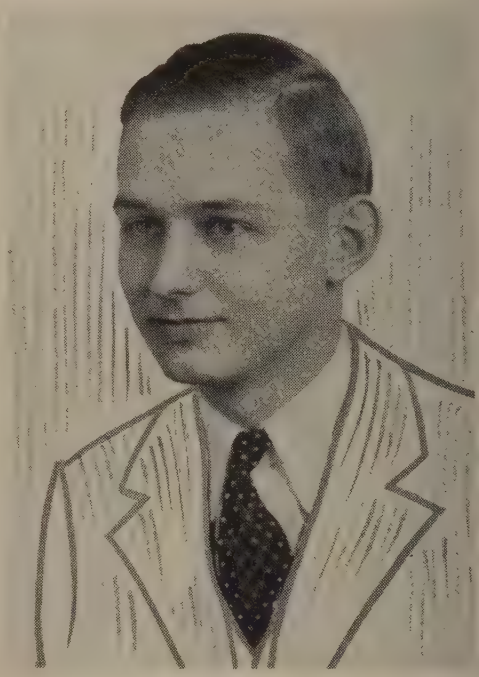
So today. While there are human beings in Europe living under military regimentation, we in America are not free; while there are refugees without homes—some even without countries—we cannot enjoy the comforts of our own homes; while there are women and children starving because of famine or blockade, our hearts hunger with and for them; while there are peoples anywhere living under the constant dread of bombs that fall at midnight and destruction that wasteth at noonday, we are not at peace.

We are members one of another. Spiritual isolationism is impossible for Christians. We cannot concentrate upon our own good fortune and forget others' sufferings. Contrary to the prevailing spirit of the hour, our thanksgiving this year must be tempered, rather than heightened, by the glaring contrast between our lot and that of others less happily situated. We must not pray: "O God I thank thee that I am not like other men." Instead we will say, with the publican: "O God, have mercy upon us"—for our share in the world's sin, and for the callous selfishness that prevents us from doing more to relieve the sufferings of our fellows.

II

At the other extreme are those who, because of their broad sympathy and Christlike sensitiveness to the world's sorrow, are plunged into deep despair over the present plight of humanity, who see nothing for which to give thanks at this midnight hour. Theirs is more the mood of weeping over Jerusalem, than of singing hymns of praise and gratitude. On every side they see tottering and falling the institutions, ideals and hopes which have sustained in our generation all precious human and cultural values. Not without reason they sense that civilization is now undergoing a transition perhaps as thoroughgoing and far-reaching in its consequences as the fall of Rome in the early fifth century. Like Saint Jerome, who lived through that cataclysmic decline and fall, they lament: "The light of the world has been put out." "Who would have believed that Rome [the Franco-British system of empire] . . . would at length crumble to pieces, the mother and grave of her children? . . . In vain I try to draw myself away from the sight."

One can easily understand such pessimism, arising as it does out of an enlightened sense of world citizen-



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ship and personal identification with the agonies of humanity. One respects it as infinitely more Christian than the smug complacency of the Thank-God-I-am-an-American school. Yet it is not enough. It doubts God. It does not help us "at midnight to rise up to give thee thanks."

III

A ray of light illumines our darkness when we consider that this "midnight" is man-made. It is a "blackout" of culture, but not of God, a pathetic contrivance of our own minds, a devilish fabrication of our own hands, the hideous creature of our selfish passions, "a particular demonstration of the power of sin." But it is more than that—and here our ray of light becomes as warming and all-embracing as the noonday sun. For it is a token of the utter dependability of the moral order. The tragedies of this hour, far from showing God's weakness, demonstrate so clearly that he who runs may see, that the God of the prophets and of Jesus still reigns. "Do not be deceived. God is not to be sneered at. A man will reap just what he sows."

When the depression was in its second year, John Haynes Holmes preached a prophetic sermon on "The Good in Bad Times." His message, to many of us, was both clarifying and heartening. The best thing about such a time, he urged, is that it demonstrates clearly "that we still live in a moral universe." Suppose it had been possible for the First World War, with its orgy of hatred and violence, to "come and go, and everything still proceed exactly as before," would it not have meant that we lived in a senseless and immoral world? Suppose it had been possible for an economic order based upon self-interest and greed to perpetuate itself without ever leading to disaster, would it not have meant that the God of the prophets was pure illusion?

Must we not say the same of this new war? How could we have continued to believe in God if this war had *not* come—given the past conduct and present disposition of all the nations: their shortsighted self-interest, their reliance upon force rather than justice, their unwillingness to sacrifice economic advantage or political sovereignty to the requirements of a stable world order? It would have been a crazy world indeed if, after we had snuffed out the lights of even-handed justice, common decency, mutual trust, the Golden Rule, and devotion to the common human welfare, darkness had not closed in around us and our kind.

> The nations are plunged into the pit which they have made;
> Their foot is caught in the net which they have hidden.
> The Lord is made known; he has executed judgment. (Psalm 9:15f)
>
> At midnight I rise up to give thee thanks,
> Because of thy righteous judgments. (Psalm 119:62)

This may seem but feeble consolation to many lovers of humanity who wish the world to have peace without having paid the price thereof. And yet what fact is ultimately more reassuring than the integrity of the universe itself? Without this, even though we were to achieve peace and prosperity by some short cut or miracle, this utopia would have no sure foundation. After man had stumbled and bruised himself time after time against the physical laws of the universe he learned finally to adjust himself to them and even to utilize them for the enrichment of life. Must it not inevitably be so in the moral and spiritual realm as well?

We return once more to the decline and fall of Roman civilization. In striking contrast to the pessimism of Jerome, in that dark hour, stands the confident faith of Augustine as revealed in his "City of God." As realistic as his gloomy contemporary when it came to facing the bitter facts, Augustine nevertheless saw amid the wreckage of the earthly city the battlements of a heavenly city. The Christian church became the receiver in bankruptcy for all that was Rome, and through the dreams, endeavors and sacrifices of men as good and as bad as ourselves, brought mankind from the night of despair and barbarism to the light of a better day.

So it shall be again. This is our faith. This is our task. If you and I, if the church universal, preserve this faith and are committed to this enterprise, then it is indeed several minutes *past* midnight in London and the world. The sun of culture has passed its nadir. The light of a new day will eventually dispel the shadows of the present moment.

At midnight, then, let us rise up to give thanks to God, the unshaken ground of our hope and a never failing source of strength. And let us stay up to prepare for the dawn of a fairer day of peace in which all men will have the heart to be glad and rejoice.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Richard K. Morton

O LORD MOST HIGH, gratefully we praise Thee for Thy presence in the depths and for Thy power manifest in the very hells we make. After all the bitterness of deprivations, the bewilderment of losses, the arbitrariness of our purposes, the hollow allurements of our designs, the distrustfulness of worry, and the unreasonableness of hatreds and strife, we turn to Thee and find that Thou hast been, all the while, by our side.

Thou hast given us, O God, the amazing power to seek Thee and to incarnate Thy spirit. Thou hast placed us in a world of free possibility and of undying hope. Thou hast made it possible also for us to make our time of living abundant, fruitful, purposeful, and suggestive of all that is good and true and beautiful. We thank Thee, our Father, for all benefits continually bestowed upon Thy still uncomprehending children and for Thy forgiveness to a still unforgiving people. We thank Thee, too, for a way of living through which we shall be enlightened and shall be saved, a way crowned with communion with Thee because we have the purity of vision, the consecration of heart, whereby we may see Thee.

We praise Thee, O God, for a life of freedom in which we must choose the right. We praise Thee, O God, for a life of discipline in which we must win the victory. We praise Thee, O God, for a life of hope in which we attain by steadfastness and perseverence. We praise Thee, O God, for a life of service through which we may find Thy peace. We praise Thee, O God, for a life of many sacrifices through which we may come to a realization of Thy power and Thy fullness.

We praise Thee, O God, not for material benefits or fortunate happenings, but for the revelation of Thy love, for an abiding faith, and we offer our petitions not for any grant for ourselves or others, but for a deepening awareness of Thee among us all and a growing worthiness to be Thy children, in Christ's name. Amen.

Preacher in the Pew

By Ansley C. Moore

WHILE on vacation last summer I had three free Sundays. No, I did not sleep, play golf, loll on the beach, or lounge in a bathrobe with the Sunday papers. Like the postman who takes a walk on his vacation, I went to church! And I went on *each* of the three Sunday mornings. I sat in a pew and it was an experience indeed. Only once in five years before this summer had I been free from the responsibility of preaching on Sunday, and that Sunday I attended church in Rome where a listless preacher spoke to an empty church. Since that experience was completely disappointing, it was not without some little tingle of excitement that I found myself with three Sunday mornings before me and any number of large churches in a great southern city from which to choose.

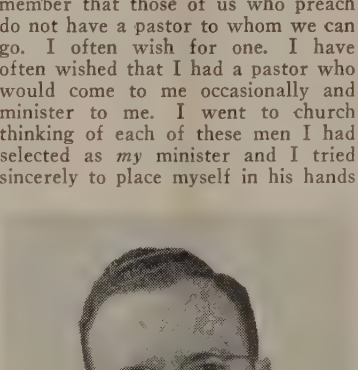
● *A Sermon Batting Average of .333*

The three Sundays are now behind me. I have sat down and evaluated the experience of worshiping in three great churches. Frankly, the experience as a whole was disappointing. Two of the three preachers let me down. I had only three Sundays in five years and at the close of each one I checked it off grudgingly. I had sat down with the Saturday newspapers and read the sermon subjects of some one hundred and fifty ministers. With the same care that I used in selecting the theme for my faculty sermon in the seminary, I selected my three churches. I set out on each Sunday morning with high glee, not because I do not love to preach, but because I was free for once from that titanic responsibility.

I walked with a light step and a light heart. I was to sit in a pew and really open my heart before God, letting the clean air from his regions sweep the cobwebs from the dark places of mine. I was to bring my dusty cares out into the sunlight of his love without a thought as to whether or not the organist had got my cue or the usher satisfied the old lady about the draft. I was going to church to sit in a pew and in my heart I was glad. But two of the three preachers failed me. One out of three hit the bull's eye. Perhaps .333 is a pretty high batting average in preaching as in baseball. Or is it?

● *Sermons Without the Flavor of Worship*

I cannot honestly say that I went with too much of a critical eye. I went sincerely wanting to worship and with a deep-felt thirst for a drink of living water and a very real hunger for some living bread. You must remember that those of us who preach do not have a pastor to whom we can go. I often wish for one. I have often wished that I had a pastor who would come to me occasionally and minister to me. I went to church thinking of each of these men I had selected as *my* minister and I tried sincerely to place myself in his hands



Ansley C. Moore

remembering that Jesus said something about becoming as a little child.

As I sat down in the pew I said to my other self, the preacher: "Now you trot on off for a while while I worship. I don't want you about for the next few minutes for fear you'll drag out the commentaries, the scalpel and the other workshop tools and begin to dissect this brother!" So far as I could tell the preacher in me obeyed and I—the ordinary member of the congregation—settled down in the pew to seek a complete worship experience. Once I found it. Twice I went home, not exactly hungry—but the sermon failed to contribute to the worship. I had to worship in spite of the sermon!

● *Friendliness That Was Not Friendly—to Worship*

Two of the preachers failed me and I can tell you why. All three had beautiful churches. All three had reasonably well worked out orders of worship. All three had good music. All three had a corps of distinguished looking, upper-crust business men as ushers. In two churches the ushers were inconspicuous and dignified. In the third the ushers were too friendl *inside* the sanctuary. They talked wit people coming down the aisles. The patted each newcomer on the bac and one usher clowned through th order of worship until the sermo period, making the not-too-seriou worshipers smile. From his sport dress one would suppose that th usher was a newly converted Sunda morning golfer who had formerl justified himself by saying he coul worship better out in the open—"blue domers," we preachers call them—an his conversion had not yet shake from him the atmosphere of the nin teenth hole.

But it was not the externals tha kept two of these services from click ing. It was the way these ministe conducted themselves, and the orde of worship. It was also the way the preached.

● *When a Worshipe Was Cheate*

Two of these ministers, the tw who failed to satisfy me, are olde than I. I doubt if either has eve read a good book on worship. Th orders of worship which they ha prepared were bare so far as th rich, historic materials of worship a concerned. Obviously, both looke upon the sermon as the chief featu of the service. This was doubly u fortunate because, the sermon failin almost completely, the worshiper wa cheated—that is, unless he forced hin self to worship in spite of the ministe and the order of worship.

Both made those terrible announc ments! I doubt if the good Lord wi ever forgive one of his ministers fo whooping up a weiner roast in th midst of a high experience of Chri tian worship. Just about the time w centered our attention upon God, bot ministers projected their own perso alities into the service. They woul not let the printed order of worsh do its perfect work. These two preac ers were the greatest hindrance t worship the congregation had. Th hardest thing I ever have to do is think about God for more than flashing moment. Strange, isn't it, th we have such a time thinking abo God for one minute, yet we read th morning news and we can think nothing else all day long! But tho preachers bothered me. They were a ways bobbing up and saying somethin when I felt that we all needed to b thinking for a few moments, at leas about God.

All of this can be excused, howeve as it obviously did not bother the co

gregations which had had little or no training in the fine art of worship. After all, the service was not planned for ministers. The inexcusable thing about these two preachers was that they did not say anything, and they said it poorly. Both had poor voices, monotonous, funereal, deadening. Neither one had a fresh thought, a clever phrase, a gripping figure of speech. Both missed golden opportunities to dramatize incidents about which they spoke. Neither had imagination. Both had piety, of a sort. Neither had a burning message for this day. Neither had real passion. Like the backwoods preacher of another day who is reported to have written in the margin of his notes at various points, "Let voice tremble here," both resorted to shaky voices to indicate feeling. Both said the deadly obvious and it was just that—dead.

Both prayed better than they preached. One, in his prayer, rose almost to lyric poetry. His prayer almost saved the service for me, but not quite. Both likely were using old sermons which gripped their own hearts years ago when first written, but they could not be warmed over now. They had been heated too often before. I was disappointed and half mad about it, too.

● *Isaiah's Vision Brought Down to Date*

The minister who did not fail me—ah, that man! He was twenty years younger than his two colleagues. He had written the sermon *that* week. It had a fresh smell like bread recently taken from the oven. Isaiah's vision of God was the center of his thought. Isaiah had spoken to this young minister and had stood just behind his shoulder as he wrote the sermon. Isaiah had thrilled that young chap and now he was thrilling me. Why, bless you, I wanted to get right up and walk out and find a pulpit, vacation or no vacation, and preach about the vision which Isaiah had in days remarkably like these.

This young minister stood up there and "said his piece" in a conversational tone which was loud enough for all to hear, but he did not shout. He spoke earnestly, pleadingly. He used the language of this age, and I liked that. He obviously did not think that changing the language to modern phraseology would change the content of the Christian gospel, as some of the watch-dogs of orthodoxy foolishly think. He did me good, this young chap, and I came away with a vision of God and a vision of service, knowing that even if Sargon does fall upon us from across the ocean, God can still be seen, high and lifted up, and that he will make himself real to those who serve his people.

I'm glad I had a vacation and I'm glad I selected those three churches. I learned anew some lessons from each—positive lessons from one, negative from two. The positive lesson was a simple one: that freshness and effectiveness come from work in the study day by day. The negative lesson was one of patience and sympathy with the congregation. God knows that the pew has to be long-suffering and kind. When the pulpit learns to sit in the pew, there will be more humility in the heart of the preacher.

Poems for the Times

By Thomas Curtis Clark

'Come, Follow Me'

ATHWART the jangling of our creeds is heard,
From out the past, one calm, clear word:
A Son of Wisdom walked beside the sea
And said unto His friends: "Come, follow Me."

And they who rose and followed left behind
Their small disputes. Slow yielding to His mind,
They found a master purpose. He was King
Whose love had lured them from their trafficking.

How foolish we who set against an age
Distraught and lost, our creedal heritage!
There stands a world of hate, of vision dim—
That we might speak to them, "Come, follow Him!"

The Day of Peace

WHEN will peace come?
When the lips of "patriots" are dumb
Throughout the world;
When the pure white flag of brotherhood
Shall be unfurled.

When will war die?
When from every land beneath the sky
"Laws" shall have passed,
And the higher, truer Law of Love
Shall bind men fast.

Today

THE proud dictators now rule the earth,
The people bend to their will;
But hearts still sing of a meek Child's birth
And trust in a Cross on a hill.

Consummation

WITH bloody wars the ages reek,
But ageless is the word
Of Him whom all the ages seek.
Said He: "Put up thy sword!"

We Thank Thee

NOT for our lands, our wide-flung prarie wealth,
Our mighty rivers born of friendly spring;
Our inland seas, our mountains proud and high,
Forests and orchards richly blossoming;—
Not for these, Lord, our deepest thanks are said
As, humbly glad, we hail this day serene;
Not for these most, dear Father of our lives,
But for the love that in all things is seen.

We thank Thee not for prestige born of war,
For dauntless navies built for battle stress;
Nor would we boast of armies massed for strife;
These all are vain, O Lord of kindliness.
What need have we of swords and bayonets,
Of mighty cannon belching poisoned flame!
O, woo us from the pagan love of these
Lest we again defile Thy sacred name.

We thank Thee, Lord, on this recurring day,
For liberty to worship as we will;
We thank Thee for the hero souls of old
Who dared wild seas their mission to fulfill.
O, gird our hearts with stalwart faith in good,
Give us new trust in Thy providing hand,
And may a spirit born of brotherhood
Inspire our hearts and bless our native land.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

Rev. CLARENCE A. SPAULDING *was* Rhodes scholar at St. John's College, Oxford University, from 1908 to 1911. Graduating from Auburn Theological Seminary, Mr. Spaulding held pastorates in Pasadena and Santa Barbara, Calif., and in 1931 he came to the leadership of the First Presbyterian Church in River Forest, a suburb of Chicago. He has served as vice-chairman of the National Commission of the Presbyterian Church on marriage and divorce, and as chairman of the social relations department of the Chicago presbytery. The sermon published in this issue was delivered in the chapel of Stanford University.

Since 1907 Rev. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES has been minister of the famous Community Church (formerly Church of the Messiah), New York city. He has been a militant voice in behalf of the underprivileged and oppressed, and against militarism, for a generation. He has been active in such organizations as the War Resisters League, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Fellowship for Social Justice.

Rev. HENRY HITT CRANE *was ordained* in the Methodist ministry in 1916, and held pastorates in Gorham, Me., Newton, Mass., Malden, Mass., Scranton, Pa, and since 1938 has led the activities of Central Methodist Church, Detroit. During the First World War h was in "Y" secretarial service in England and Franc He received his education at Wesleyan University, Co necticut, and at Boston University.

Following a ministry of several years i Wyoming, Rev. MARK A. DAWBER was called to the pr fessorship of rural leadership at Boston University. I 1926 he became superintendent of the department of tow and country work of the Methodist Board of Home Mi sions. He is now executive secretary of the Home Mi sions Council. Dr. Dawber's sermon has been prepare as a special message for the observance of Men an Missions Sunday on November 17.

Rev. HAROLD L. LUNGER *came last yea* to the pastorate of the Austin Boulevard Christia Church after serving churches in Akron, Ohio, and We Haven, Conn. For a brief period he directed travelin seminars for the National Religion and Labor Found tion. Mr. Lunger received his theological training Yale Divinity School.

Rev. RICHARD K. MORTON *is minist* of the Congregational Church in Edgewood, R. I.

Rev. ANSLEY C. MOORE *is minister* the Memorial Presbyterian Church, Clearwater, Fla.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

R. WRAGGE MORLEY, Holy Trinity Church, Bournemouth, Eng. "What Are the Springs of Courage?" II Sam. 10:12—"Be of good courage, and let us play the man for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which seemeth him good."

WILFRED D. HAMILTON, Memorial Methodist, Plymouth, Mass. "Righteousness and Peace." Isa. 32:17—"The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever."

PHILIP ALLEN SWARTZ, First Congregational, Poughkeepsie, N. Y. "The Faith That Undergirds Life." Gal. 2:20—"I live by faith in the Son of God."

RICHARD C. RAINES, Hennepin Ave. Methodist, Minneapolis, Minn. "The Ramparts We Watch." Psalm 127:1—"Except the Lord keep the city, the watchers wake but in vain."

CHARLES D. BRODHEAD, First Methodist, Media, Pa. "It Has Happened Here!" Lam. 4:12—"The kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy shoul have entered into the gates of Jerusalem."

JOHN F. C. GREEN, Evangelical Congregational, M Keesport, Pa. "Salvation by Participation." Phi 3:10—"I want to know him in the power of resurre tion, and to share his sufferings and even his death, the hope of attaining resurrection from the dead."

HENRY S. NOON, Memorial Methodist, Paoli, Pa. "Spi itual Preparedness." Luke 24:49—"Tarry ye . . . unt ye be endued with power from on high."

NORMAN E. NYGAARD, First Presbyterian, Los Angele Cal. "Christians Are Not Timid Souls." (Sermon young people) II Tim. 1:3-14—"God has not given a timid spirit but a spirit of power and love and di cipline." (Moffatt)

CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY, First Presbyterian, Pittsburg Pa. "Getting the Best of Trouble." Psalm 119:71- "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Psal 4:1—"Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress

OWEN HUTCHISON, First Presbyterian, Troy Grove, I "When God Lets Us Down." I Sam. 28:5, 6—"A when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afrai and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquire of Jehovah, Jehovah answered him not."

ELMER S. FREEMAN, Essex Community Church, Chicag Ill. "The Eternal Jellyfish." I Kings 18:21—"Ho long halt ye between two opinions; if Jehovah be Go follow him, but if Baal, then follow him."

CLYDE H. WILCOX, First Congregational, St. Clair, Mic "An Upset Status Quo." Acts 17:6—"These upsette of the whole world have come here too." (Moffatt)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of sermon
. . . . . .
Text used (write out the text)
. . . . . .
Name of minister
. . . . . .
Name of church
. . . . . .
Address

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

WHILE our minds are preoccupied with war and politics, we must not allow the decision of the Protestant Episcopal Church to unite with the Federal Council of Churches to escape the notice which so important an event deserves. The decision was made at the General Convention held in Kansas City this October. It is a consummation which has long been devoutly prayed for by the great majority of the members of that communion and by their brethren of other communions. Action has been inhibited by various considerations, such as the hesitancy of this great church to ally itself too integrally with a body whose constituent members were "Protestant" in the sense of holding a view of the church contrasting with the "catholic" (small "c") view. The sympathy of the Episcopal Church with the Federal Council has never been doubted. Some years ago it established a halfway connection through its social service organization, contributing to the support of the Council and sharing in some of its work. It is now to be a full-fledged member. The Council will be greatly strengthened by this action, and the Episcopal Church will be strengthened, as indeed will American Christianity in general. We all now wish to see our Southern Baptist, Southern Presbyterian and Lutheran brethren take the same stand. The unique thing about the Federal Council is that it enables the churches to work together in the wide field that is open to Christian cooperation, while leaving each constituent body unimpaired and uncommitted in all matters pertaining to its internal and institutional life. If any denomination believes itself possessed of some truth or value which the rest of the church should have, there is much more likelihood of its being appropriated by others in the comradeship of Christian work than in self-sufficient isolation.

Episcopal Church Joins The Federal Council

The Book of the Month

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY? *By Charles Clayton Morrison. Willett, Clark & Company. $3.00.*

IF readers of the "Pulpit" expect me to allow the publication of my own book to pass unnoticed on this page, they credit me with a power to resist temptation which I do not possess. But perhaps I will be pardoned if I venture to say a few words about it. For many years there had been developing in my mind the idea that the Christian church had not yet been given its proper place in Christian theology. Opening almost any theological treatise, I found the church at the very end—the last chapter. Such books began with doctrines—the doctrines of God, Christ, Incarnation, Atonement, Sacraments and the rest—and ended with the church. This left the impression that Christianity was a system of beliefs and practices, and that the church was an afterthought, a kind of appendage to the doctrines. My book reverses this order. It starts with the church, and its whole thesis is that the Christian Church *is* Christianity. It defines the church, not in terms of an institutional organization, though this is included, but in terms of a specific community in history oriented in a specific manner toward God. This community is the revelation of God in history. I found my conviction of the general thesis strongly confirmed when it became clear to my mind that Jesus, instead of being unconcerned about the church, was occupied with it as his major concern. To go "back to Jesus" is not to go back to a churchless Christianity. I think I found greater satisfaction in writing the chapter on "The Church of the Remnant" than any other. The rather startling reception which the book has received has been, needless to say, gratifying to its author who waits, however, with just a touch of uneasiness for the judgment of the critics!

A Thought for the Month

ONE of the most disquieting developments in modern Protestantism is the widening cleft between the clergy and the laity. In his seminary, the minister has made an intensive study of the Bible, of Christian doctrines, Christian ethics, church history, hymnody, liturgics—in a word, the lore of the Christian faith. It is assumed that all these disciplines are a necessary equipment for his Christian leadership. But when he undertakes the responsibilities of a parish and its pulpit, he soon becomes consciously or subconsciously aware that most of his seminary knowledge is unusable. The church is organized around other ideas and interests. It has not been trained to think as he has been trained to think. For the rank and file of its members the Bible has been a closed book since grandfather's time. About the great Christian doctrines they know only a little more than nothing. As for the history of the church, their ignorance is pathetic. They are uninformed about even the contemporary doings of their own denomination, for they do not read any church paper—even if, for duty's sake, they subscribe to one. Their interest in the church is expressed mainly in its practicalities, its sociabilities and its trivialities. Thus there exists a cleavage between the mentality of the minister and the mentality of his congregation. To span this gap the minister can do one of two things. He can project his parish and pulpit work as if he were the leader of a glorified Rotary Club. Or he can set himself the task of educating his people in those matters which he was trained in the seminary to regard as the essential equipment of a Christian minister. The spirit of modern secularism has inundated the mind of the church, and it can be driven back only by a ministry which sees that the future of Christianity depends upon the transmission of the Christian heritage from generation to generation.

Religious Illiteracy

Charles Clayton Morrison

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